

amendment as well as Senator Kahle's amendment to it.

SENATOR MARVEL: The issue is the Lamb amendment to 620. First the Chair recognizes Senator Schmit and then Senator George and then Senator Maresh. Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, and members of the Legislature, this bill was discussed at great length by the Committee on Agriculture and Environment. The amendment proposed by Senator Lamb is an amendment proposed by a farm organization who have in the past proposed similar amendments. The committee adopted a refund provision for those farmers who choose not to contribute to the fund. In other words, if you do not want to contribute, you can just plain ask for your money and get it back. Secondly, Senator Maresh added a provision. It is their own private sunset provision which allows the bill, the provisions of the bill, to go out of existence, if by 1984 someone doesn't like what is going on. I think with these two provisions, the referendum is not necessary and I am not going to say anything about the great corn growing county of Cherry County but I would suggest, or Custer, but I would suggest that there are those individuals in this part of the state who are at least as interested in the corn checkoff program as they are out in Custer County. I know something about the beet checkoff program and I heard all about the various importance of having the various escape clauses, et cetera, and as a producer of beef, we don't have a beef checkoff program. Now you can sit here and you can muddle it around and muddle it around as long as you want to but I have yet to receive I think maybe more than two or three letters who have said we want a referendum. Now I am a member of the organization for which he is proposing the referendum and I respect that organization. It is a good one. But I also have to respect the testimony of the many farmers who came before the committee and said, why waste the money and the effort on the referendum when a farmer can get his money back any time that he wants it. It seems to me that that takes all of the steam out of the argument for the referendum. There is all kinds of charges and countercharges but I would like to say this. The wheat program has operated in this state for a long time and it has operated well. Senator Richard Lewis was instrumental in the original legislation of that bill. Senator Bill Waldo, a member of this body for a long period of time, was active with the wheat growers and the Wheat Commission, as were several other members of this body. The Wheat Commission operates well. I remember very distinctly a few years ago we had some ideas on that bill of how we were going to clean it up. Senator DeCamp had occasion to be traveling overseas and I asked him specifically to stop and visit the Western Wheat Associates office in Tokyo as well as Korea and several other offices. He did so, and even Senator DeCamp who had started out to be very critical came back praising the efforts of those overseas offices. Now you can argue about the right of referendum, et cetera, but we have built protection into the bill for the individual farmer. I am a corn producer myself. I think that the bill carries adequate protection for the corn farmer. In any event,....

SENATOR MARVEL: One minute.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...the very easiest, quickest and lowest